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HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY WAHNETA Y. FOUNTAIN

Life member and former trustee of the Walpack Historical Society, Wahnetta Y. Fountain, turned 100 March 14, 2020.

For many years, Wahnetta and Bradley, her late husband, spent weekends, vacations and holidays at their camp, affectionately named "Fountainblue" on the Delaware River at the former Alonzo DePue farm campground in Sandyston, where they lived in a retrofitted bus very comfortably. When forced to leave their second home on the River, Wahnetta and Brad rented the cabin closest to the River at Camp Shapanack, Walpack, where they continued to enjoy a lively outdoor social life, fishing for shad and smoking their catch. They also enjoyed Brad's music – he was a talented musician. His trumpet could be heard up and down the Delaware. And, of course, they painted their little cabin blue.

After Brad's untimely death, Wahnetta continued renting from Angela M. Nilan at Camp Shapanack for several more years, continuing until 1992.

Her fondest memories include "lots of company, lots of parties." She recalls the July 4th Bicentennial Celebration at DePue's camp, with a parade that everyone marched in. No bystanders. And, then gathering at Louie Sweller's cabin for a short patriotic ceremony, singing the *Star Spangled Banner*, and having a delicious picnic with all her friends.

A life well-lived, a lot of it on the banks of the Delaware. Happy Birthday, Wahnetta!

LOWER WALPACK CEMETERY UPDATE *by Sharon Spangenberg*

It has been discovered that past written research information titled "Veterans Buried in Local Cemeteries" may not be accurate. In the Lower Walpack Cemetery, veteran status for the following cannot be verified: Daniel S. Smith, Philip J. Smith, and George Crissman.

In addition, research revealed that the G.A.R. cast iron flag holder, found broken in the Lower Walpack Cemetery, actually belongs in the Walpack Center Cemetery at the grave site of James M. Johnson. Pvt. Johnson was a member of Capt. George V. Griggs Post 111 G.A.R. in Newton, NJ. This marker was repaired by Curtis Engesser of Blue Sparks Welding in Newton. Because of its fragility, it is on display in the Walpack Historical Society's Rosenkrans Museum. Although James M. Johnson referred to himself as a Private, he served for a year as Corporal and Sergeant.

The presentation/rededication of the Lower Walpack Cemetery planned for July 19th has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will be placed on next year's schedule of events.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Society actively stimulates an awareness and interest in the Walpack area through lectures, tours, publications and special events, such as Van Campen Day, hikes and exhibits at county-wide events.

It promotes collection, preservation and dissemination of Walpack area history and acts as a repository for artifacts of the Walpack area, and also maintains a small museum and book store.

THE PANDEMIC & VANDALISM STRIKES WALPACK CENTER

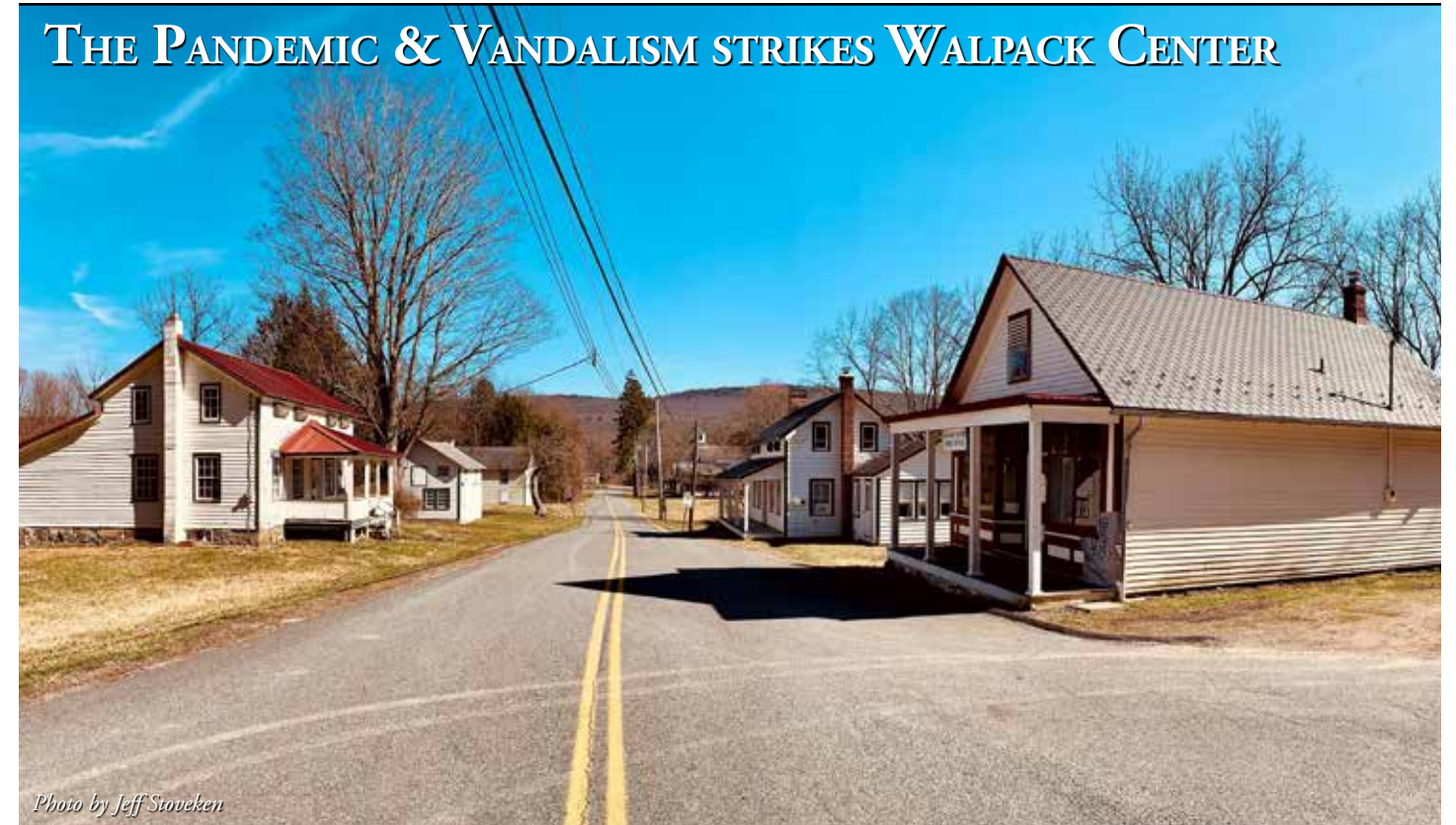


Photo by Jeff Stoveken



Photo by Jeff Stoveken

During the tough times of living with a worldwide health crisis, social distancing, quarantines and shutdowns, it became even more difficult to preserve Walpack's unique historical buildings. Sadly, vandals took advantage of the lack of human activity to vent their angst on the structures around Walpack Center. The side door of the Post Office and General Store was kicked in and the inside was searched. The back door of the Rosenkrans House (which also serves as the Walpack Historical Society's Museum) sustained considerable damage as an attempted entry failed. The back door of the Robbins Barn was also breached.

Vandals also broke into several other historic buildings throughout Walpack Township, all of which were re-secured by Walpack Historical Society members and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA) Historic Property Stewards.

Your help is needed to spread the word that vandalism and wanton destruction is occurring and will not be tolerated. If you are in DEWA, please watch for suspicious people and behaviors and report them to the National Park Service dispatch at 570-426-2457

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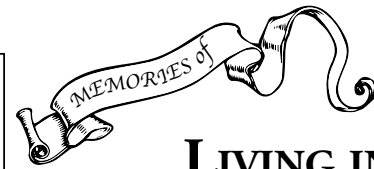
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Event Photos by Tom Dust
Walpack Historical Society Newsletter
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As a follow-up to our hike to the Richard Layton 1812 house in November, memories from three past occupants were received. All three of the following stories are unedited accounts by the author.

LIVING IN THE RICHARD LAYTON HOUSE

by Nancy and Phil Campbell

The Richard Layton house was assigned as quarters by the National Park Service to New Jersey District Ranger Philip Campbell from 1978 to 1987 for protection of the building. Two sons, Paul and Sam lived there for some elementary school years at Sandyston/Walpack School up to some high school years at Kittatinny Regional High School. The boys got off the school bus at the end of the dirt lane and had to walk in to the house a little over a half mile.



Living in the Richard Layton house was living with nature. No other houses could be seen from the house, just the barns, yard and trees. The house was made of stone. The walls were about a foot thick; the cats loved to sleep on the wide, deep window sills. There were fossils in the stones on the outside end of the house to the left as you faced the front door. The other end of the house had the letters E.B. and the date 1812 near the top and an espaliered pear tree growing.

The house was cold and drafty in the winter. It was heated with fuel oil and a wood stove in the kitchen. There was also a wood stove in the basement which we did not use. In winter, the snow slid off the slate roof like an avalanche. The park service plowed the dirt lane leading out to the road when it snowed. There was no air conditioning. The basement was damp and even flooded once with enough water to float the chest freezer.

Some of the wildlife we observed in the house were a ring-necked snake, a bat, and a large tiger salamander in the

basement. Several times we found the shed skin of a black rat snake on the front porch. It was about six feet long. We also saw perhaps an Eastern milk snake shedding its skin there.

One Easter day we were having an Easter egg hunt with Paul and Sam. Phil and I hid eggs for the boys outside, and the boys hid eggs for us to find inside the house. Sam had climbed up a large tree searching for eggs and was sitting about ten feet off the ground. Suddenly, he leaped out of the tree! It turns out the black rat snake had poked its head out of a hole up in the tree, startling Sam.

Another favorite wildlife memory was along an old road heading south from the house. We frequently jogged past a huge old sycamore tree there. It turns out a 450 pound black bear was hibernating in that tree.

We were able to observe the bear biologist tranquilize, weigh and radio-collar that black bear who spent the winter as our neighbor.

We did have human neighbors as well, Charles and Elaine Gerth and their three children, Charles, David, and Lisa. They lived in a stone house not far from ours, just up the lane. We spent several Thanksgivings with them at our home. Some of the people went hunting for pheasant in the morning, while others cooked hors d'oeuvres and turkey dinner. The large kitchen was great for hosting the dinner.

Once when the power went out in the

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THE GREAT COUNCIL TREE

by Dan Tassey

The present day account of The Great Council Tree began in April 2017 when Jen Wycalek, Historian and Trustee of the Walpack Historical Society and I set out on a long-awaited hike. Jen explained where she wanted to go and proposed how we should get there. Her recollection included an old road that once connected now named Old Mine Road to Ridge Road in Walpack Township. Jen's description of what we would be looking for were the ruins of the William Smith homestead that had been destroyed by fire in the early 1920's. She said she was told that it had been previously the homestead of Benjamin Rosenkrans, Colonel in the War of 1812, and that there was a spring that flowed next to the front door. She also talked about a big oak tree in the area and reminded me of that frequently as we walked. Her memory of its exact location, however, was not clear. Our hike started out from Ridge Road and headed northwest on an overgrown pre-1860 wagon road. Not too far into our journey the road became nearly impassable due to thorn bushes. As we made our way through, we eventually came to a heap of stones peering above the briars that looked to be the corner of an old foundation. It appeared that we had found what we were looking for – the Smith homestead. As we got closer, we saw a set of steps and a barnyard watering trough with a spring passing next to it. This confirmed our location. After briefly exploring the area, we decided to leave and looked for an easier way out. We chose to head north uphill into a new growth wooded area. As we crested the hill, we could see the crown of an oak tree. Looking down into a small brushy gully, there it stood – a big forked white oak tree – even more magnificent than what I had anticipated. To come across a tree of this magnitude was a mystical moment for me. There was something very different that grabbed my attention. Based on the geography of the tree and some immediate field observations, the historical significance of this tree became evident. We left the area, but I knew I would return soon.

Since that day in April 2017, much research was done and many men and woman were consulted. This magnificent tree was given the name The Great Council Tree. It is estimated to be over 300 years old, with a circumference of 16 feet 2 inches, a height of 90 feet and a crown of 70 feet.

It is a Heritage Tree and is a great specimen of an ancient forest that once existed in Walpack. It has survived the ax, the match, and the plow. It is a mighty White Oak Tree that boldly stands as a Biblically sacred tree as well as a Tree of Life

as believed by the indigenous people that once inhabited the Minisink Valley. It has witnessed the first frontiersmen, the first Dutch settlers of the Minisink wilderness, the colonization of New Jersey, and the division of New Jersey into East and West Jersey. It stands as a living monument to its surveyors, David Ryerson and John Lawrence for which the survey line was so named. It has witnessed the exodus of the Indians



Hixon Spangenberg Family Tree

from the area, the horrors of the French and Indian War, the march of Revolutionary soldiers down one of the oldest roads in America (River Road, aka the Old Mine Road). It stands on land once owned by William Penn, Samuel Neville, one of the original proprietors, as well as the great John Rosenkrans, Revolutionary War Colonel and his son Benjamin Rosenkrans who was a Colonel in the War of 1812.

Based on the tree's measurements and extensive research, an application was submitted to have it registered in New Jersey's Heritage Tree Program. Wouldn't it be a great tribute to America's frontiersmen to have this Big White Oak Tree now known as The Great Council Tree, successfully enrolled?

Our appreciation and thanks to all the members and friends of WHS who remembered the Society while taking advantage of their employer's *Employee Matching Gift programs*. Your generosity helps projects such as the Walpack M.E. Church Restoration Project.

The Walpack Historical Society would like to acknowledge and express its appreciation to our many Lifetime Members for their generous support.

MEMORIES of
1812 RICHARD LAYTON - EMMETT STRUBLE FARM by Wayne Treible

Several years have passed since I last offered an article for publication in the Walpack Historical Newsletter. The article published in the recent newsletter in reference to the Richard Layton Farm compelled me to offer my family's experiences living there. The following background information will hopefully provide a better understanding of the complexity of events which lead to this centuries old farm becoming my very first home, and holds the most cherished and dearest memories in my lifetime.

Fred and his wife Margaret Doll from Union, New Jersey, were very successful Realtors, came to Walpack in the fall of 1920 and purchased the Samuel Cole farm located on the main road leading from Walpack Center to Flatbrookville just slightly upstream from Haney's Mill. (Most buildings still remain on the premises in dilapidated condition). The Dolls were one of about a dozen who came to Walpack in this same era and invested in real estate on a circulating rumor that the federal government was considering building a dam on the Delaware River, though most strongly denied that reasoning.

The Coles were elated with Doll's offer to not only purchase their farm, but to allow them to remain and continue their farming operation, plus hiring my dad Bush Treible Jr. (age 21) as a full time farm employee for additional support was an added bonus. My dad took up residency with the Coles living there on the farm.

In 1929, with no indication of further government action contemplated, Doll built a new two story house located between the existing farm house and the farm buildings as a residence for the Coles. My dad dug the basement for the house with the horses and dirt scoop. With completion of the new house for the Coles, Doll renovated the original farm house for his own personal use, adding a Delco battery light plant for interior lighting.

Doll always had an eye for real estate offered for sale, with the passing of Emmett Struble

In 1924 owner of the Layton Farm, prompted Doll to ultimately purchase the property to settle the Struble Estate. Walpack School records indicate Roland Struble (Emmett's son) graduated 8th grade in 1928.

The Dolls always traveled in a chauffeured driven car, early in the 1930's Fred's widowed chauffeur, brought his unmarried daughter to the farm to clean the recently renovated farm house. A romance blossomed almost immediately between the daughter Margaret Jensen and my dad, with marriage on the horizon, the thought of a place to live turned to the Struble farm house, which had been vacant for several years, with signs of neglect and deterioration requiring extensive repair and refurbishing to become livable. Their families bowed to the task, as well as neighbors and friends to help restore the house to

acceptable condition.

My Dad's brother, Uncle Bill Treible accepted the challenge of restoring the water system. The hand dug well located in the front and to the right of the house appeared to have a mechanical water delivery system, showing an exposed hand crank protruding from the metal canister located above the well head. When removed from the well, the system appeared to be a series of threaded rods bolted together with a toothed sprocket mounted on each end of the rod, with a wide linked chain surrounding the sprockets formed a continuous loop with small oblong buckets attached to the chain at various intervals which would fill with water when submersed, and with rotation by the hand crank provided the means of lifting water to the surface.



At a depth of twelve feet a boulder was encountered protruding within the well, requiring the well to be offset around this obstruction, and continued to its successful location.

With a rope tied around his waist and a miner's light strapped to his forehead, Uncle Bill was lowered into the well with a bucket attached to a rope to collect debris and clean the walls. The well mechanism was

reassembled and repaired with spare parts found stored within the canister located above the wellhead.

Once again the water system was functional, Uncle Bill was mighty proud with the success of his endeavor, as restoring water service was crucial to my folks living there.

The origin of this well could certainly be described as being an exceptional challenge for its time barring unusual characteristics, a depth of seventy feet, with stone lined walls, and providing a good water supply, truly remains an outstanding marvel.

Doll suffered a fatal heart attack in January 1934, which was a heavy blow to all who had come to know him however both his wife and son Hubert were determined to carry on Fred's vision for the farms. The Dolls maintained a winter home in Bradenton, Florida where Mrs. Doll began spending more time. However she returned to the farm periodically throughout the summers and fall accompanied by lady friends and Daughter Minette Lowe. As the Coles continued to age, my dad assumed a larger responsibility of the farm operation, and with their passing took over and ran it as if it were his own, hiring seasonal help as needed. My dad's employment with the Dolls spanned all but twenty years.

My parents married in August of 1935, and after a four day honeymoon trip to Gettysburg, PA settled in at the Struble Farm House to begin their new life there together.

Success at an auction sale provided them with a Kalamazoo kitchen stove with a double door warming closet, a ten gallon hot water jacket, and sporting a light green and ivory porcelain

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MEMORIES of
LIVING IN THE RICHARD LAYTON HOUSE by Elaine (Campbell) Hamilton



Elaine (Campbell) Hamilton was contacted by a member of the Walpack Historical Society and asked if she would share her memories while living in the Richard Layton house in the late 1970's. The 'Sleepy Valley Farm' article that appeared in the Fall 2019 newsletter was also provided to her along with photos from the November hike. The following are her memories.

"My best memories at Sleepy Valley Farm had to do with being outside: the serenity, solitude, privacy, and beauty. Inside, the kitchen was best. I recall the thick, perfectly-constructed stone walls and deep windows – especially the kitchen window that looked to the south just past the L of the barns.

Our family, at Phil Campbell's residence there, after my time, had a lot of fun in that big kitchen. I remember the big wood stove in the huge fireplace. Thanksgiving feasts, many gathered there. In the morning the men and dogs went hunting; women cooking; cats and dogs coming

in the front door; cooks throwing them out the kitchen back door, only to have them show up again by having been allowed in the front door again. Laughter, warmth, thankfulness of all being together in such a beautiful home.

(My son) Paul's memories are about the outside, too. Playing in the old barns, the silo, etc. He did remind me of the couple of years he and (his brother) Sam were constructing a raft by the barns with plans to pull it down the old road to the Delaware River so that they could float to the Water Gap. In the end, the raft was so heavy, when they started hauling it down the overgrown road, they only made it a couple 100 yards before they gave up. It may still be there. He also remembers talking the Sandyston School bus driver (Paul and Sam were the last kids off the bus) into driving them the ½ mile to the house. It worked out well for the kids, but the bus driver had to back out the entire ½ mile.

MEMORIES of
LIVING IN THE RICHARD LAYTON HOUSE

continued from pg. 2

winter, we donned cross country skis and headed to the Gerths' house to have pancakes made on their wood stove. It was a treat to be able to step out the door to cross country ski or hike.

We had a garden for a few summers, but the woodchucks climbed over the fence and ate most of the lettuce. Autumn was spent raking leaves from the yard, a job which required the whole family.

While we lived in the Richard Layton house, the

National Park Service repaired or strengthened a few interior wall surfaces and replaced paint and wallpaper in the hall, bedroom, and bathroom. This was supervised by the park historic architect, Tom Solon. He had us choose wallpaper and paint colors from historically accurate samples.

These are a few of the many fond memories from our privileged time living in the Richard Layton House in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

MEMORIES OF **1812 RICHARD LAYTON - EMMETT STRUBLE FARM** *continued from pg. 4*

enamel finish. A cast iron log stove purchased from Sears Roebuck provided heat in their living area. A Kenmore wringer washer complete with a gasoline engine and ten foot flexible exhaust pipe. A free standing ice box, and battery powered radio, completed mother's line of appliances.

The following year, I was born at Newton Memorial Hospital on Nine Eleven, 1936, Mother and I returned home to "The Struble Farm" with my Dad in his 1933 Chevy two door sedan. I don't remember much about this time there, but was upset when told we would be leaving, moving to the Cole farm. The Coles passed in 1937, and my family moved from the Struble place to the Cole's house two months before my sister was born in January, 1938. It was a big relief for my folks to make the move, as it made our lives much easier. The winters spent as the Struble place were very hard on my parents. The lane leading up Pompey Ridge was at a perfect angle to the open valley allowing the unrelenting westward winds to fill the roadway with impassible drifted snow. Lester Heater lived on the neighboring original Cornelius Gunn farm, his sons were still living at home, Hymen(skeet), Donald(Cricket), Russell(grasshop), came to the aid of my dad and shoveled the lane three times during the winter of 1936-37

Living at the Struble farm required my dad to commute to the Cole farm on a daily basis, the farms were located directly across from each other, separated by Walpack Hill. An established road that intersects with the main road at the top of Pompey opposite the Struble road ran across the ridge through the upper Haney Farm and down the steep side of the ridge connecting to the main road just above Haney's mill road, provided the shortest distance between the two farms. My dad chose to use a horse and spring wagon and sleigh with snow covered road conditions for his daily commute, which required keeping the horse shod sharp for traveling this challenging route, which he did himself. The 1920's through the mid 1940's saw the roads mostly snow covered during the winter months, with only sand applied to hills for improved traction.



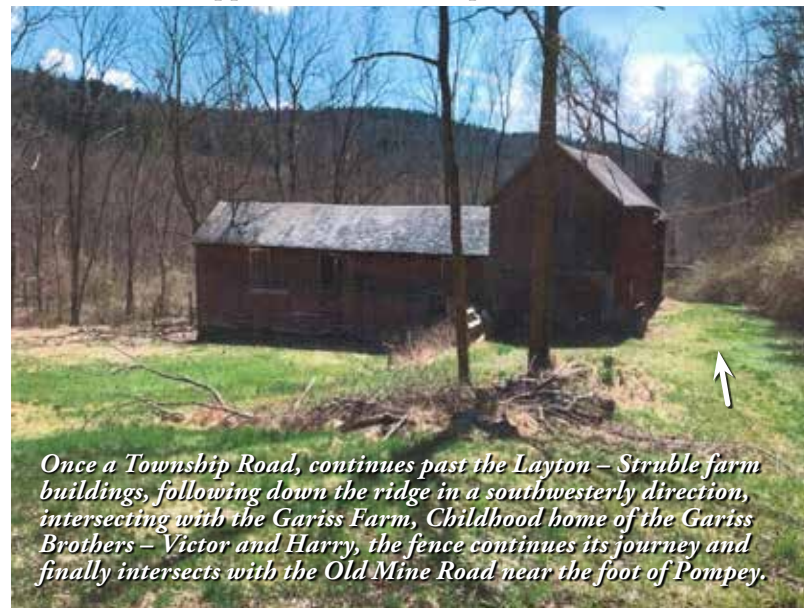
Gable End Date 1812 Layton - Struble Farm House

With failing eyesight, Mrs. Doll could no longer enjoy the beauty Walpack had to offer, and reluctantly offered the farms for sale with an ad placed in the Wall Street Journal. The ad caught the eye of Rudolph Maichin of Brooklyn, New York, and purchased the farms in September of 1940, Lock, Stock, and Barrel, titled as "Broadstone Farms".

In 1947, Maichin conveyed his Walpack Real Estate to business associates Jack and Marcelline Geer. Mrs. Geer soon developed a strong attachment to the Layton-Struble farm house spending much of her free time there along with friends Dave Ringle, and Bud Clippinger. It was there within the walls of this stone house this trio collaborated and composed the lyrics to the song "There's a Little Church in Walpack" in reference to the St Mathews Roman Catholic church standing on the banks of the river, and went on to form their own publishing company,

"Sleepy Valley Music," while bestowing "Sleepy Valley" as the location of the Layton-Struble farm, which continues to endure.

On behalf of my sister, I offer this article as a tribute to our parents for their sacrifice, while granting the gift of life, we have come to know and cherish.



Once a Township Road, continues past the Layton - Struble farm buildings, following down the ridge in a southwesterly direction, intersecting with the Gariss Farm, Childhood home of the Gariss Brothers - Victor and Harry, the fence continues its journey and finally intersects with the Old Mine Road near the foot of Pompey.



2020 CALENDAR

| | |
|--------------|---|
| April 19 | Spring Hike: Pompey Ridge to Chado |
| April 26 | Spring Dinner at <i>The Walpack Inn</i> |
| May 17 | A presentation by Jennifer Palmer |
| June 6 | <i>National Trail Day</i> |
| June 28 | Walpack at the Movies |
| July 19 | Lower Walpack Cemetery by Sharon Spangenberg |
| Aug. 16 | 2020 anniversary of 1955 flood by Don Stieh |
| Sept. 20 | Fire Tower hike by Dan Tassej & Mike Orlowski |
| Oct. 11 | Van Campen Day |
| Nov. 1 | Fall Hike - Military Road East |
| Dec. 5 | Walpack Christmas - Church and Museum open |
| Dec. 6 | Holiday Dinner - Walpack Inn |
| Dec. 12 & 13 | Walpack Christmas - Church and Museum open |

Visit WalpackHistory.org for calendar updates, changes and details.

SUPPORT THE WHS NEWSLETTER

We are looking for Corporate sponsors and/or WHS members who are interested in supporting our newsletter. As costs continue to rise and our membership grows we need to offset some of the costs. Companies can have a business card sized ad, about 3.5" x 2". For WHS members, we would proudly display your name in our newsletter as a sponsor, or you can remain anonymous.

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THANK YOU Brian Banner! He is a LIFE MEMBER who has donated \$100.00 in support of the newsletter in honor of Len Peck and Ruth Ann Whitesell.

2020 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOW DUE

Did you know there are two ways to pay your membership dues?

1. Visit www.walpackhistory.org, click on the Membership tab to pay your 2019 membership dues Online using PayPal.
2. If you wish to pay your dues through the mail, please fill out the Membership Form on page 7 and send it along with your payment to the given address on the form.

All memberships must be made current in order to remain on our mailing list. Thank you!

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A Docent is a person who acts as a guide, typically on a voluntary basis. We are always looking for new people to help us at our events and meetings throughout the year.

Please call, **973-948-4903**, and ask to speak with Jen Wycalek to learn more about how you can help play a part in history.



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Thank you for becoming a member of the Walpack Historical Society. Your dues helps us to fulfill our mission to actively stimulate an awareness and interest in the Walpack area through lectures, tours, publications and special events, such as Van Campen Day, hikes and exhibits at county wide events.

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THANK YOU!

We offer a most gracious THANK YOU to the following members and friends who have so generously made donations.

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